(c) whether any compensation has been paid to the next of the kin of the deceased and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 32 Indian pilgrims died in the stampede which took place at Mina on April 9, 1998.

(c) No compensation has been paid to the next of kin.

Shortfall in production of wheat

*125. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether wheat production this year suffered a deficit of 4.5 million tonnes as compared to the target of 68.5 million tonnes;

(b) if so, the stock position of wheat as at the beginning of the harvest season and the estimated annual requirement; and

(c) the amount of wheat proposed to be imported to meet the shortfall, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The production of wheat is likely to be 66.38 million tonnes as compared to the target of 68.50 million tonnes, thus showing a shortfall of 2.12 million tonnes.

(b) The stock of wheat held by FCI and State agencies as on 1st April, 1998 stood at 5.07 million tonnes. During the current marketing season, the Government has procured 11.64 million tonnes of wheat upto 1st June, 1998. It has been estimated that for meeting the demand of the Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other welfare schemes of the Government, around 11 million tonnes of wheat are required annually.

(c) The Government has decided to import 1.5 million tonnes of wheat during 1998-99.

Ban on procurement of poultry from flu-affected countries

*126. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recommended banning poultry and procurement of chicks and fowls from the bird flu-affected countries;

(b) whether any research has been carried out to treat the birds affected by flu; and

(c) whether any anti-flu vaccine has been developed for the poultry industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The disease does not exist in this country. However, as per the recommendation of Expert Group constituted by Department of Animal Husbandary & Dairying, the action for the development of infrastructure for the diagnosis of the disease has been initiated.

LPG waiting list

*127. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the position of the waiting list for LPG connection in the country will October, 1997;

(b) how many connections were provided in different categories during the last three years;

(c) whether Government propose to get the ever increasing waiting list cleared at a faster rate; and

(d) if so, the details thereof